

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-188. (canceled)

189. (currently amended) Apparatus for measuring mechanical deformation, comprising:

a housing;

a base electrode; and

a deformable electrode, mechanically coupled to the base electrode and to the housing, the base electrode and the deformable electrode defining a capacitor having capacitance, such that the capacitance is varied responsive to deformation of the deformable electrode,

wherein when no force is applied to the deformable electrode, a distance between the base electrode and the deformable electrode varies along a length of the deformable electrode, the base electrode and the deformable electrode converging to a closest possible distance from each other, which is fixed by the apparatus.

190. (canceled)

191. (original) Apparatus according to claim 189, wherein the deformable electrode is adapted to be coupled to a user, so as to deform responsive to respiration of user.

192. (original) Apparatus according to claim 189, and comprising a member, mechanically coupled to the deformable electrode, such that movement of the member deforms the deformable electrode and varies the capacitance.

193. (original) Apparatus according to claim 192, and comprising a belt, adapted to be placed around a torso of a user and to cause movement of the member responsive to a change in circumference of the torso.

194. (original) Apparatus according to claim 192, wherein the member is adapted to be in physical contact with the deformable electrode.

195-287. (canceled)

288. (currently amended) A method for measuring mechanical deformation, comprising mechanically coupling a base electrode to a deformable electrode, the base electrode and the deformable electrode defining a capacitor having capacitance, such that:

the capacitance is varied responsive to deformation of the deformable electrode,  
and

when no force is applied to the deformable electrode, a distance between the  
base electrode and the deformable electrode varies along a length of the deformable  
electrode, the base electrode and the deformable electrode converging to a closest  
possible distance from each other, which is fixed by the apparatus.

289-294. (canceled)